

privilege, especially mat or banctuary, on which the proceedings of the Parliament were to turn. Past events had already shown, and coming events were soon to show again, that there was a strong Wycliffite and reforming party in the capital; and it was to the recognised interest of all commercial men that the protection of fraudulent debtors in churches should cease. The real reason why Parliament could not be held at Westminster is clear enough. The Abbey was still unconsecrated. The Abbot and monks still defied the government. It would scarcely have been possible or decent to ask their leave to use the Chapter House for Parliamentary purposes. The position at Westminster would have been strained, though there would have been little to fear from London. Lords and Commons accordingly met at Gloucester in the Abbey of St. Peter's, to which was attached the magnificent edifice afterwards converted into the Cathedral by Henry the Eighth. It was felt that a great Parliamentary Dattle was impending between Church and State. Before the Houses had been sitting many days, Adam Houghton, Bishop of St. David's, resigned the Chancellorship. It was impossible for so stout a churchman to remain in office when the counsellors of the King were about to inaugurate a direct attack on Church privileges.¹ He was succeeded by Lord Richard Scrope, an able and respected public servant. Scrope's duty was to appease the anger of the Commons at the unvarying ill-success that attended the war, in spite of the continued sacrifices of the taxpayer. He was able to point out that all last year's taxes had duly passed through the hands of Philpot and Walworth, as the House had ordained. The Commons demanded to be shown the accounts. The King ordered Walworth and Philpot to produce their papers, and publicly explain the items of expenditure. No serious exposure resulted from the inquiry—the money had been honestly, if not wisely, spent. The active inquisition of the Commons during these years prevented any such corruption as that which had prevailed before the Good Parliament.²

But the business which lends such particular interest to the proceedings at Gloucester was the discussion on the Bight

¹ See Ap.

« *Rot. Parl.*, **iii.** 85 ; *Antiquary** **iv.**